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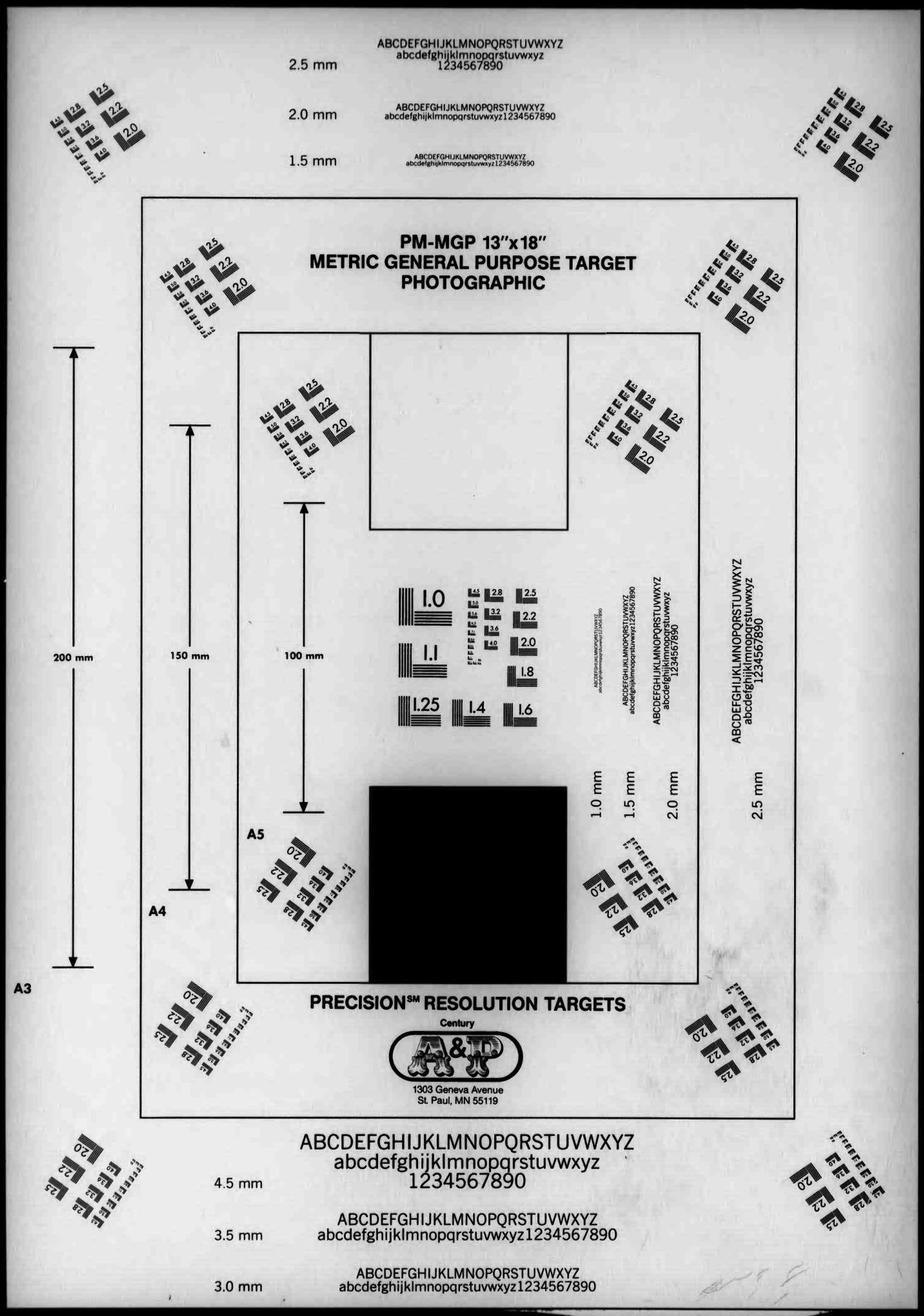
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SURVEY OF VEGETABLE OILS, 1915-1918

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

SURVEY OF VEGETABLE OILS

1915 - 1918

Prepared in the Special Price Research Section

By

J. Donald Edwards

Under the Direction of

Stella Stewart, Chief
Retail Price Division

April, 1941

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SURVEY OF VEGETABLE OILS, 1915-1918

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Summary

The uses of vegetable oils fall into two general classifications, edible and inedible. As they come from the crushing mill, as crude oil, most of them are inedible. After refining they are usually edible. Vegetable oils are used in the crude or the refined state accordingly as market conditions promise the greatest profit to the processors.

Most of the edible vegetable oil used during the World War was mixed with other ingredients to form either oleomargarine or "lard substitute." Other important uses included cooking oil, salad oil, sardine-packing oil, oil for medical emulsions, and others. Inedible oil was used primarily for soap and paint and varnish, but it was also used in candle pitch, cosmetics, black grease, oil cloth, silk manufacture, water proofing compounds, artificial leather, etc. As a by-product of soap making, large quantities of glycerine were extracted. Vegetable oils had wartime importance because of their value as food, as soap and as paint for both military and civilian use, and also as an ingredient of explosives.

Cottonseed oil was the most important vegetable oil during the World War period. Based on domestic consumption for 1917, cottonseed oil accounted for 2/3 of the edible vegetable oils, and almost 1/3 of the inedible oil group. Among the inedible oils it was not quite as important as coconut oil. Soya bean oil accounted for most of the rest of this group. Palm oil, palm kernel oil, and other oils, while having properties making them indispensable to certain industries, were not used in large

quantities. *

Most domestically consumed oils were crushed in the United States from the oilseed. Cottonseed, peanuts, and corn were home grown. Copra, palm nuts, palm kernels, and a small quantity of soya beans were imported as raw material for crushing. However, nearly all of the soya bean oil, and about 30 percent of the coconut oil domestically consumed were imported as crude oil for domestic processing.

Many vegetable oils are interchangeable in use. In soap making cottonseed oil can replace coconut oil with very little change in the product. Soya bean oil can be used as a substitute for both. In the manufacture of edible products, such as shortening, cottonseed oil, peanut oil, soya bean oil, certain animal fats, and other vegetable oils could be used with equal facility. Because of this interchangeability, price movements of all vegetable oils are correlated. Due to its volume in domestic industry, cottonseed oil dominates these price movements.

By February, 1918, the War Industries Board price index for edible vegetable oil prices had risen 152% above the 1913-14 average. Subsequently the price was stabilized under domestic control by the Food Administration and export-import control by the War Trade Board. This general price movement was closely followed by that of inedible vegetable oils.

The bulk of the price rise was accounted for by two factors:

---

* These proportions were taken from the weights used in computing indexes by the War Industries Board.

1. The increased dollar spread between the oil seed and the finished product produced in the domestic crushing mills. Between 1914 and 1918 this spread increased nearly 400 percent.

2. The rise in the price of oilseeds; for example, the price of cottonseed in November, 1917 reached a level 206 percent above the 1913-14 average.

Food Administration regulation was intended to eliminate speculation and hoarding and to prevent unwarranted price advances. To this end:-

Trading in vegetable oils on the New York Produce Exchange, the primary exchange dealing in oils, was brought under strict supervision in October, 1917.

The trade was brought under license control in November, 1917. Prices of cottonseed meal, crude cottonseed oil, and lard substitute were fixed.

An operating differential (or margin) was set for cottonseed crushing mills in December, 1917.

The price of cottonseed was specifically fixed in August, 1918.

Export-import control consisted of a complete embargo both on exports of domestic oil and imports of competing oils. The War Trade Board problem was to recognize the point at which trade conditions were sufficiently serious to warrant lifting the embargoes.

The effectiveness both of Food Administration and War Trade Board controls in 1918 was increased by such factors as a larger supply of home grown raw materials and an easier shipping situation. Acceptance of control by the industry was of major importance. With these aids control was undoubtedly quite successful.

Three months after the incidence of regulation, trade reaction to control was as follows: "For the first time in the industry's history

it is now on a solid manufacturing basis, where profits must depend on efficiency of operations and the successful solving of milling problems." 2/

After the Armistice, because of anticipated importation of cheap foreign oils, all demand for domestic oil virtually ceased. The Food Administration and the War Trade Board cooperated to relieve the situation. First the embargo on exports of vegetable oils was lifted: the embargo on imports continued in force. Second, domestic consumers were induced to use domestic oils. Lastly, large exports of domestic oil for European food relief were arranged. With the congestion thus relieved, control was lifted in May, 1919. After the control was removed, prices continued high until the post-war depression of 1920-21.

DETAIL

Vegetable Oil Prices, 1915-18

As a group, vegetable oils began their wartime price rise in the last half of 1915. A year after the war in Europe started the War Industries Board price index for edible vegetable oils still averaged the same as in 1913-14. The absence of a price rise was due to the plentiful supply of domestically produced cottonseed oil and to the availability of raw materials for the other oils like coconut, soya bean, palm, and palm kernel oils from the Philippines, Dutch East Indies, Japan, and other non-war zones. 12/

The sharp price rise which first occurred late in 1915 was due in large part to the anticipated short cotton crop which would mean a shortage of cottonseed and consequently of cottonseed oil. Contemporaneously, the developing shipping shortage was making more difficult

the importation of copra (the raw material of coconut oil), and other vegetable oils and oilseeds.

The more acute shortages of shipping in 1916 and 1917 and the increased demand for vegetable oils after we entered the war in April, 1917, explain the recurrence of the sharp increase in vegetable oil prices during the last half of each year. The trade press placed emphasis on the lack of increase in the size of the 1916 and 1917 cotton crops to explain the price increases.

The increased demand for vegetable oils was a result of several contributing elements. 1) A by-product of vegetable oils is glycerine, used in explosives. 2/ 2) The need to provide our European Allies with meats made necessary heavy exports of meat animals; a shortage of animal fats resulted, and domestic consumption of vegetable oil substitutes for these fats was greatly increased. 8/

Vegetable oil prices continued to advance until early 1918 when the War Industries Board index reached a peak 152% above the 1913-14 average. At this point the Food Administration controls became effective. They were reinforced by a prospective increase in the cotton crop and a slightly easier shipping situation. 8/ There were no further price advances during the war.

The percent of spread between the prices of raw material and crude oil, and between the crude oil and refined oil remained the same or decreased while the wholesale price of oil was increasing. The actual money differential, however, increased appreciably, as shown in the following table.

Date	Cottonseed per Pound	Crude Cotton-seed Oil Per Pound (f.o.b. mill)	Difference Crude Oil Minus Seed	Refined Cottonseed Oil Per Pound (N.Y.)	Difference Refined Oil minus Crude Oil
December, 1914	$0.0089	$0.0444	$0.0355	$0.0584	$0.0140
December, 1915	.0178	.0731	.0553	.0845	.0114
December, 1916	.0282	.1135	.0853	.1245	.0110
December, 1917	.0342	.1733	.1391	.1861	.0128
December, 1918	.0325	.1750	.1425	.2025	.0275

It must be remembered that these differences include freight, and that freight rates were increasing. 1/ Freight is particularly important in the difference between crude and refined oil, and would account for some of the increase in this spread. However, even allowing for such expenses, it is obvious that the crushing mills enjoyed a very large increase in their operating dollar margin.

The Government Control of Vegetable Oils

Food Administration

On May 29, 1917, shortly after the United States declared war the Interstate Cotton Seed Crushers Association, through a special committee, offered its facilities and resources to the government. 1/ While the special committee was in Washington it discovered that the Council of National Defense Food Board was planning to decentralize its work and establish State Food Administrations. An advisory telegram was sent to members of the association asking them to "recommend to governor of your state competent man friendly to our interests." 1/

Late in June, 1917, the Interstate Cotton Seed Crushers Association sent a second committee to Washington to investigate matters important to their business. 1/ Mr. Hoover of the Food Board asked this committee to have the crushers create a permanent committee to advise him on matters pertaining to the crushing industry so he would not "ruin the business by some untoward act." 1/ Mr. Fielding Wallace, President of the Interstate Cotton Seed Crushers Association, expressed himself in the "Cotton Oil Press:" "When a man who practically controls your business tells you that he wants you to cooperate with him so that no action of his will have a material or drastic adverse effect upon the usual or ordinary course of your particular business, it is indeed impressive."

On July 10, the crushers formed a Cottonseed Products Council and various special committees to act in an advisory capacity when the Food Board needed them. At the same time provision was made for a permanent Washington representative to protect crushers' interests.

Mr. Hoover felt that sufficient fats and oils were not available. The emphasis was on reducing consumption, without materially increasing production. "... the per capita use of fats in this country every day in the year is 3½ to 4 oz., of soap the per capita consumption yearly is 30 pounds. And soap means fat...." It was necessary to reduce this "wasteful" consumption because, "The vegetable fats come from the tropics.... They cannot be brought out in their usual quantities until facilities for importation are normal.... At this very time visible supplies of fats are short and prices for what are available are high." In addition, although domestic supplies of cottonseed and soya bean oil might be increased in the autumn, this increase "will by no means counter-balance" the existing shortage. 2/

Although Mr. Hoover emphasized the importation problem, domestic distribution was hampered by the railroad congestion. Railroads had become tied up before we entered the war because shippers would not unload cargoes from rail to vessels to venture on a submarine infested ocean. The loss of railroad cars due to this demurrage created a car shortage. To help relieve this situation the Council of National Defense in August advised crushers to order a full year's supply of raw material and fuel, thus using full carlots. 3/ Later, to further relieve the car shortage, it was necessary to advise crushers to load and unload cars promptly. 3/

On August 10, 1917, the United States Food Administration was created. Mr. Hoover, now designated Food Administrator, immediately organized a Division of Collateral Commodities part of which was the Cottonseed Industry Section. The domestic vegetable oil products industry was controlled by this section. 4/

In September the Cottonseed Industry Section advised crushers that "definitely nothing" would be done to fix prices but that it was considering "a plan to license all legitimate interests in trade, having in mind this plan would eliminate the seed speculator and prevent hoarding which would correct many evils in the business." The crushers interpreted this as "assurance that the Food Administration will not later on undertake to fix prices on seed or products." 1/

Part of the speculation and hoarding mentioned by the Food Administration occurred on the produce exchanges. The primary exchange dealing in vegetable oils was the New York Produce Exchange. On October 2, 1917, the managers of this exchange in view of the rapidly rising prices of oil, asked all members to confine their operations to legitimate trade

interests. * This was intended to stop speculation both by the trade and by outside interests but not to hamper legitimate "hedging" operations by which bonafide members of the industry insured themselves against loss. The exchange managers warned that if such restriction was not imposed voluntarily, "the Food Administration would suppress hoarding of products or undue speculative activity having for its aim the enhancement of prices." 5/ On October 9, at the request of the Food Administration, the New York Produce Exchange stopped "speculative trading" in cottonseed oil. Cottonseed oil futures were limited to two months. Daily price fluctuations were limited to one cent per pound. 5/

Late in October 1917, the permanent Washington representative of the Crushers Association was withdrawn in compliance with Section 3 of the Food and Fuel Control Act. 2/ This section provided that one committee must not represent both an industry to the government and the government to the industry. The Cottonseed Council with its advisory committees, previously mentioned, continued to function for the trade. The Government, however, now employed its own experts on cottonseed products problems.

The Presidential licensing proclamation of October 8, 1917, stated that persons engaged in "importing, manufacturing... or distributing ... cottonseed, cottonseed oil, cottonseed cake, cottonseed meal, peanut oil, peanut meal, soya bean oil, soya bean meal, palm oil, and copra oil" must obtain a Food Administration license on or before November 1, 1917. Crushing mills with an average monthly capacity of less than 150 tons, farmers, and small retail dealers were exempted from control. ** 6/

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* Prices of refined cottonseed oil rose from $0.14 per pound in July, 1917, to $0.18 in October, 1917, a price level 140% above the 1913-14 average.

** Later the size of exempted crushing mills was reduced from 150 tons to 20 tons. This brought nearly 95% of the mills under license control.

By this proclamation over 80% of the mills were brought under license control. * Immediately the Food Administration promulgated certain regulations intended to minimize hoarding and speculation. Supplies on hand for cottonseed merchants, crushers, and meal and cake dealers, were limited to 60 calender days. Prices were limited to cost plus profit instead of the customary replacement value plus profit. 5/ Profits were not limited beyond the general clause "reasonable advance over actual cost." 7/

The immediate reaction of the "Oil Paint and Drug Reporter" was, "Drastic Rules Re Cottonseed." More mature consideration, however, resulted in the statement that "Cottonseed Men Welcome Rules." This article continued that "all those concerned in the manufacture of cottonseed products will be glad to see the price stabilized and brought down to normal."

The control techniques employed by the Food Administration were designed to encourage the industry to accept regulation voluntarily. The trade press all through this period was proud of the industry's outwardly willing acceptance of control. 2/ At first glance it would seem that regulation of vegetable oils was undertaken only at the urgent request of the trade. Closer scrutiny reveals the guarded use of certain "big sticks."

The procedure used in setting the price of cottonseed cake is a good example. On November 15, 1917, at the request of the Food Administration, the cottonseed crushers held a meeting to devise ways and means of relieving the feed problem of cattlemen in drought stricken Texas. In the course of the meeting it was suggested, apparently by one of the trade, that it would assist the cattlemen if the price of cottonseed cake was limited.

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* Estimated from census figures. Census of Manufacturers, 1920, Vol.VIII. Checked against 1917 figures compiled by the "Cotton Oil Press."

The crushers soon agreed upon a price of $50.00 per ton. All this appears on the surface to be voluntary. However, the Food Administration had quietly informed the crushers that if some type of assistance was not determined by the meeting an "embargo" would be placed on "all shipments of cake to points outside the drought area." 2/ Hence, it was apparently the suggestion of the trade that the price "be brought down to normal" which induced the Food Administration to set prices. On November 28, 1917, the Administration requested refiners to pay only $1.27 per gallon for crude cottonseed oil. 1/ This was 5 cents below the quoted market price at that time. 2/

The trade did not take kindly to the set price. In Georgia the crushers complained that $1.27 per gallon was too low to give the crushers a fair profit. They said that prices of seed, labor, and fuel had all increased so much that the 173% price increase since 1913-14 was not enough to cover increased costs. 3/ Other crushers likewise complained. As Mr. Littleton of Texas remarked later, "The first we knew, they told us we had to help win the war and must let the cattlemen have some feed. We sold at $7.50 per ton less than the market price. So with oil; the price was fixed at a figure that did not let us out ...." 3/ In short, price fixing was not popular. *

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* To clear the record, the price of cottonseed meal had been set on November 15, 1917 to aid cattlemen in drought stricken Texas and New Mexico. Then prices of cottonseed oil were set as mentioned. Simultaneously the manufacturers' price of lard compound was fixed at 22½ cents. The prices of other oils were not fixed because their prices moved "sympathetically" with that of cottonseed oil. Consequently if cottonseed oil prices were kept down the prices of other oils would not rise appreciably unless a shortage developed, which, fortunately, did not occur.

The Food Administration in December, 1917, set a $13.00 operating margin for crushing mills. This was to cover all operating costs including bags and profits. 8/ In brief, if oil mills bought cottonseed at $70.00 per ton, their gross return from the sale of all its products was limited to $83.00 * After this action, violent criticism of control was absent from the trade journals.

On January 1, 1918, an order was issued that crude cottonseed oil which had previously been sold by the gallon should be sold by the pound as were the other oils. 3/ At the same time the regulations were somewhat extended. The Food Administration increased the price of crude cottonseed oil about ½ cent per pound to $0.175. Crushers supplies of cottonseed were limited to 60 calendar days. Orders maturing more than 4 months in the future were prohibited. Purchases of the Army, the Navy, and certain semi-official agencies were given priority. 6/

After these regulations had been enforced for several months cottonseed oil men discovered that they benefited from control. They appreciated the guarantee of a definite price for their products and the resultant assured profits. It was finally realized that with the price of oil, meal, and later linters fixed, and with the $13.00 cost margin specified, the price of cottonseed was really fixed. 1/ Hence, in April, 1918, they conferred with the cottonseed oil refiners and the manufacturers of lard substitutes

* The $13.00 maximum differential per ton of cottonseed was based upon the following estimated yields.

	East of Mississippi River	West of Mississippi River
Oil (Gallons)	43	38
Meal (Pounds)	960	1000
Linters (Pounds)	140	150
Hulls (Pounds)	480	470

The difference between the two sections was based upon a difference in the oil content of the seed from the two areas. Any excess over this "base production" could be sold without regard to margin. 1/

in an attempt to assure the price of $0.175 per pound for the 1918-19 crop year. 9/ It was too early in the year to ascertain the size of the next cotton crop. Hence lard substitute manufacturers could not be sure they would use all of the cottonseed oil. They realized that to guarantee a price for only part of the oil-crush was folly. On April 14, the meeting adjourned with no action taken. 9/

Although the crushers recognized control as a good thing, they also felt the need for a greater differential to assure them of profits. Labor supply was a problem. As one journal put it, "Between the scarcity of labor and the inexperience of much of the labor employed, the superintendent is in about the same fix as the fond papa who walks the floor o'nights with twins." 3/ Moves were on foot to "draft" labor. It was proposed to give every able bodied man a work card and then "force" him to work or "take his place on the chain gang." 3/

Labor was scarce due to the army draft, the inclination of men to "take a rest" when they had a few extra dollars, the flow of labor to the better paying industries. 3/ All these forced labor costs up. Crushers claimed labor costs were up 25% to 50% from November, 1917 to April, 1918. The crushers thought they had to "get relief" from this situation or close down. 1/ They appealed for an increased differential.

The Food Administration was reluctant to guarantee the prices of cottonseed products for the coming year. It anticipated a larger crop; and with the increasing production of the American shipbuilding program the Administration also saw the possibility of greater importation of cheap foreign oils. 8/ As a result, price control lapsed on August 1, 1918 and the speculative pre-control days of 1916 and early 1917 were allowed to return. 8/ A brief sample of these conditions persuaded the

whole industry, from farmer to lard substitute manufacturer, that complete control was necessary.

There seems to have been disagreement within the trade as to the level at which prices should be fixed. The crushers, for reasons indicated below, wanted the 17.5 cent price continued. The refiners were inclined to point to the easier shipping situation and suggest a much lower price. The Food Administration agreed with the refiners. Cotton growers desired yet higher cottonseed prices.

To present the refiners point of view to the Food Administration and to the rest of the trade, the Oil Refiners and Manufacturers of Lard Substitutes War Service Committee was organized on August 10, 1918. 4/ Five days after formation, this committee refused the oil crushers' suggestion that the 1917-18 oil price be renewed. 1/

On August 14, representatives of the Food Administration and the cottonseed products industry began another two day conference. The meeting adjourned before any action was taken. The crushers wanted the set price continued but the lard substitute manufacturers still were uninformed as to the size of the cotton crop. 5/ The Food Administration did not find it advisable to force any action because of the potential increase in importation of competitive vegetable oils through a relieved shipping situation. 8/

Finally on August 22, however, the Food Administration took action. The refiners agreed to "do their best" to maintain a price of 17.5 cents for crude oil. The crushers operating margin was expanded from $13.00 to $18.50 to cover increased costs. 8/ Most of this increase was taken in the price of meal. To protect the cotton farmers, the Food Administration set the price of cottonseed at the previous year's average. 5/

The Armistice was signed November 11, 1918. Immediately, demand for cottonseed oil fell off. The Fats and Oils Section of the Food Administration, noting this, advised a strong campaign to hold world trade. The industry anticipated a deluge of cheap foreign oils. Mr. Hoover wrote, "The industry generally was afraid to purchase for fear that the price might fall, and the result was that there was an accumulation of stocks of seed and oil in many of the crude mills which caused grave apprehension." 8/

On February 11, 1919, the Food Administration held a meeting for the whole vegetable oil trade. As a result, lard substitute manufacturers agreed to use the domestic cottonseed oil in lard substitutes. The refiners tried to purchase crude oil from those crushing mills which were compelled by the congestion to close. And the crushing mills agreed to do their purchasing wherever the heaviest congestion of cottonseed existed. 8/

The plan would probably have been difficult to fulfill had it not been for the extensive purchases made by the American Relief Administration for European distribution. With American Relief Administration support, the stabilization plan was successfully carried until a Presidential Proclamation canceled Food Administration controls on May 31, 1919. 8/

Export and Import Control

Wartime control of foreign trade began with the creation of an Exports Council on June 26, 1917. 2/ On July 6, 1917, the Secretary of Commerce, chairman of the Council, warned exporters and shippers to protect themselves by making all contracts contingent upon obtaining export licenses and shipping space. 2/ Three days later the Export Control Board was created to administer the export policies of the Exports Council. 2/

A Presidential Proclamation of July 9 required a license for all

exports of vegetable oils and certain other items. 6/ A week later, licenses were also required for all imports. 3/ An authoritative list of items included in the export licensing proclamation of July 9 was issued by the Exports Council on July 26. Oil cake and oil cake meal, malt, peanuts, cottonseed oil, corn oil, copra, edible or inedible vegetable or animal grease, lard, peanut oil, and peanut butter were included. 2/ Later this list was expanded to include coconut oil. 2/

On August 15 the importers of vegetable oil formed the Oil and Oil Seeds Association of America to perform certain services in connection with the importation of oil, particularly palm and palm kernel oil. The British had been urging this ever since the war began but its necessity had not been apparent until the domestic import-export control started. 2/

On August 24, a Presidential Proclamation replaced the Export Control Board with an Exports Administrative Board. The latter assumed all duties of the former. 2/

These duties were enlarged by the Executive Order of August 27, 1917, which prohibited unlicensed shipments of vegetable oils, copra, peanuts and other specified items to non-European neutrals and the Allies. 6/ The Exports Administrative Board and the Treasury Department issued export conservation lists to interpret the order of August 27, 1917. List I covered all feeds and non-edible vegetable products (crude vegetable oils). List II covered copra, corn oil, cotton oil, and peanuts. 2/ Eleven days later the Exports Administrative Board interpreted the lists to mean that exports of vegetable oils and other specified items were practically prohibited. 2/

Administrative machinery was strengthened on October 6, 1917, by the Trading with the Enemy Act. Specific legal provision was made to "investigate regulate or prohibit under such rules or regulations" as the President or

his designated agent may make. 10/ To enforce the new powers, the control of exports and imports was centralized in the new War Trade Board on October 12, 1917. 6/ Two War Trade Board members represented the Food Administration. In determinations affecting the supply of particular foodstuffs, the Board relied largely upon the advice of commodity experts of the Food Administration. 9/

Until the Board began to appreciate the problems of balancing imports and exports with domestic requirements a conservative policy in granting export licenses was followed. Most applications for export licenses were refused. Under this policy domestic supplies were moderately increased but countries dependent upon the United States for their vegetable oil supply, like the West Indies, were desperate. Early in November, sensing the easier supply situation at home, the War Trade Board announced that applications for licenses to export lard, lard compound, and cottonseed oil to specified countries would be reconsidered. 1/

The domestic supply was still considered insufficient by the Food Administration. Mr. Hoover knew that exporters were holding cottonseed oil and cake for export. To relieve the domestic situation the Food Administration ordered that all such cottonseed oil and cake be released to the normal trade channels in the United States. 2/

To conserve shipping space, import control was extended by a Presidential Proclamation of November 28, 1917, to include copra, coconut oil, and soya bean oil. 6/ At the same time to reserve the domestic supply of fats and oils for home use, export control was extended to include cottonseed, peanut meal, soya bean meal and copra. 2/

In Canada, meantime, a serious shortage of vegetable oils and their products was developing. On October 25, 1917, a Canadian Order in Council

had lifted the ban on imports from the United States of oleomargarine, provided certain quality conditions were met. 3/ On November 15, to conserve available supplies, a similar order placed a ban on all exports of vegetable oils, fertilizers, vegetable oil meals, soap, fats and other foodstuffs. 2/ To relieve the Canadian situation, the War Trade Board in December allowed exports of cottonseed oil and other cottonseed products to Canada for local consumption provided that the Canadian Food Controller would agree to each shipment. 2/ The permission to import cottonseed oil sufficiently relieved the Canadian shortage of oil, consequently the War Trade Board replaced the ban on exports of oleomargarine. As noted below, this action eventually led to a congestion of oleomargarine in the United States and the ban was again lifted.

On December 1, 1917, a Presidential Proclamation extended import license control to all animal and vegetable oils, peanut meal, soya bean meal and other specified items. 2/ Restriction of imports was further extended on February 14, 1918, especially as regarded European products. 6/ At this point, Government regulation of exports and imports of vegetable oils was most restrictive. In effect, exports were prohibited except by special permission and imports were chosen discriminatingly. Thus domestic supplies were reserved for home use while shipping space was utilized carefully.

In March, 1918, because some local surpluses were accumulating, the Food Administration and the War Trade Board allowed a limited export of cottonseed oil, lard compound, and oleomargarine and other foodstuffs to the West Indies. 1/ On April 1, 1918, the War Trade Board began considering applications to export oleomargarine to Canada. 1/ Then the shipping situation became more serious as regarded the more distant ports like the Philippines and Japan. To help conserve shipping space the War

Trade Board thought to allow imports of oriental oils but not of the raw materials for these oils. On June 25, 1918, an embargo was placed on all imports of copra. 1/ This was too much for the oil seed crushers. They immediately complained. The embargo was canceled except in regard to prepared coconut meat. 1/

As the new cottonseed crop came in, it became evident that a surplus of cottonseed oil might develop. Consequently on August 10, 1918, the War Trade Board announced it would license exports for cottonseed oil. These licenses continued until October 1, 1918. 5/

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The War Trade Board was a valuable cooperating agency when the post-war cottonseed oil congestion described in the Food Administration story began to develop. On January 15, 1919, the embargo on vegetable oil exports to non-enemy countries was lifted. 6/ While in February, 1919 an embargo was imposed on cottonseed oil imports. 11/ This embargo was lifted in May, 1919, along with Food Administration regulations.

Footnotes

1. The Cotton Oil Press - official bulletin of the Interstate Cotton Seed Crushers Association.
2. The Oil Paint and Drug Reporter.
3. The Oil Miller - Bulletin of the Georgia Crushers Association and six other Crushers' Associations.
4. Handbook of Economic Agencies During the War of 1917 Monograph #3, Historical Division, Army War College.
5. The Commercial and Financial Chronicle.
6. Prices of Edible Vegetable Oils, War Industries Board Bulletin #15.
7. The United States Food Administration, House Document #337, 65th Congress, 2nd Session.
8. Final Report of the United States Food Administration.
9. United States Food Administration Press Releases.
10. The United States Statutes at Large.
11. Price Fixing in the United States During the War, Lewis Haney, Political Science Quarterly, 1919.
12. Animal and Expressed Vegetable Oils and Fats, Tariff Information Survey on the Act of 1913, #A - 11.

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